



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**VIRGINIA FIELD OFFICE**

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## **NASS to Look at Virginia Farmers' Production Practices and Costs**

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA – How are local farmers being affected by escalating fuel and fertilizer costs? What new production practices are they using to assure a healthy environment and an abundant crop? These and other important questions will be answered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts the 2006 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

“ARMS is USDA’s primary source of information on the production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America’s farm households,” said Kevin Barnes, director of the Virginia Field Office of USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

From September to December, NASS will conduct personal interviews with nearly 9,000 farm operators nationwide, including 125 in Virginia. They will be asked to provide information on their fertilizer, nutrient and pesticide applications, as well as their pest management and irrigation practices.

“This is the second phase of ARMS, where we focus on production practices and costs. This year, we are looking at soybeans,” said Barnes. “During the third phase of the survey, in early 2007, we will follow up with some producers to obtain additional economic data.”

While ARMS is a lengthy and complex survey, its importance cannot be underestimated, according to Barnes. “Virtually every federal farm program and policy is based on ARMS data,” he said. “Conservation programs, price support programs, risk management programs, research programs – you name it. All of them rely on information generated through this survey. That’s why it’s so important that farmers take the time to participate and ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information, straight from the source.”

Barnes assures ARMS participants that the confidentiality of their responses is protected by law. “NASS strictly safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified,” he said.

For more information about ARMS and other surveys conducted by NASS, contact the Virginia Field Office at (800) 772-0670 or visit the NASS web site at: [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov).

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